

JOE THE BOOK FARMER

MAKING GOOD ON THE LAND

By
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SYNOPSIS

Joe Weston, fourteen years old, decides to make a success of his father's run-down farm. He reads the latest scientific books. Mr. Somerville, a merchant, agrees to help him.

Joe's father is pessimistic. He sneers at book farming and book farmers. Mr. Somerville, struck with Joe's business ability and ambition, backs him in prize competitions.

Passerby on the road lingers to watch Joe operate. The sneers that were in evidence at first soon give way to looks of surprise. Joe is showing them something as a farmer.

Joe's corn is the wonder of the country. With money he receives from a commission merchant for his product he starts a bank account, which he proudly exhibits to his father.

There is a constant demand for the corn Joe is raising. In the prize competition Joe makes 125 bushels on an acre at a cost of \$12.50.

It is announced that book farmer, won the first corn prize for his county. His father says, "Son, I'm powerful proud of you."

Joe is overwhelmed with joy at receipt of a telegram that he also has won state championship. With the money he pays off part of the farm's indebtedness. He also wins trip to White House.

Joe describes to his mother and sister his trip to the White House and his talk with the president. Then he goes back to the farm which, now is the talk of the entire countryside.

Joe meets Tom Ralston, a boy of about his own age. Tom is from the north and is in quest of health. The Ralston boy's father is wealthy, and Joe and Tom become fast friends.

Tom Ralston's father takes a great liking to Joe and offers to back him and help him in every way. Joe finally accepts Mr. Ralston's offer of fifty loads of manure.

Joe buys his mother a canning outfit. His mother and sister are enthusiastic at the prospect of helping in the general money making scheme, and they start work with a will.

CHAPTER XIII.

Mr. Ralston Grateful.

BREAKFAST at the Ralston home was over, and Joe Weston, Tom and Mr. Ralston were on the front porch, where Joe was preparing to take his leave.

"Well, we've had a mighty good time, Mr. Ralston, but work time has come. No more frolicking until the crops are laid by," said Joe.

"What's laid by?" inquired Tom, anxious to obtain information from his tutor.

"Laid aside, done with—worked and tended enough—nothing to do except wait for Nature to mature 'em," answered Joe. "That is in late summer. From then until fall there is not much to do except haying or pulling fodder."

"Look here, Joe. Anything I can do to help you?" inquired Mr. Ralston.

"You've showed me more fun than I ever had before. Can't I make some return?"

"Not a thing, Mr. Ralston, unless you'll sell me that fertilizer down in the cow lot and stable yard. There's about fifty wagon loads of it, I guess, and I need barnyard stuff mighty."

"What's it worth, Joe?"

"Scraped up and ready to load, I guess it's worth 30 cents a two horse wagon load. It could be better because it's been exposed to the rain and lost lots of strength, but it is better than nothing."

"How are you going to use it?" asked Tom.

"On those four acres I have been using for prize corn and truck. I'll spread it on the oats, then turn it under."

"Fifty loads isn't much for four acres, Joe," suggested the major, who had come out on the porch and heard the talk.

"It's twelve and a half loads to the acre. That's a heap better than none. I've got about twenty-five loads at home of a compost of rotten leaves and stable scrapings, full strength and saved under shelter. I'll use that too."

"Tell you what," said Mr. Ralston; "that stable and cow lot of mine need a good cleaning, anyway. I don't calculate to do any farming much this year—there isn't enough there to do any material good on my place here. I'll just have the lot boys scrape that stuff in piles, and you can have it if you will haul it off."

"Oh, say, now—that's mighty fine of you, Mr. Ralston!" exclaimed Joe gratefully. "It will be a big help to me, because I'm needing stuff like that. I'm trying to cut the cost, and you've saved me just about \$15 in expense."

"By George, I'd better than that, then. I'll make the lot boy haul it over there for you. I want to see you win the prize this year!"

Joe Weston looked doubtful. It was a great temptation, for he had to charge in all his time expended on the acre at 8 cents an hour and the use of a two horse team and wagon at \$2 a day, those being the rules of the con-

test. Then his way suddenly appeared clear.

"Much obliged, Mr. Ralston, but I don't believe it would be just exactly right. I mean it would be actually helping me—that wouldn't appear on the record. It would give me a little advantage over the others competing, and I think I ought not to take it."

"I guess you are right, Joe. Fight it out on the square, and in case of doubt let the other fellow take the dubious chance. That will win, anyway," said Mr. Ralston. The major nodded approval.

"I'll do that very thing, sir," responded Joe quietly.

"Seems to me it would be entirely proper for you to take the stuff from me as a gift if I want to get it off my premises to get my lots clean. What do you think, major?"

"No objection in the world to that. It is just a case of where Joe is more fortunate than others in obtaining it, but he ought to haul it himself, I think."

"That's the way I look at it," said Joe.

"All right, I'll start those two darkies today to scraping it up in piles, and you can commence hauling when you are ready," said Mr. Ralston.

"I'll begin tomorrow soon after daylight."

"Oh, here now! That's too early!" objected Tom, who was to make his first actual trial of farm work when Joe started.

"No, sirree—not when you are paying \$2 a day for a team and fighting every cent of expense. Day begins at daylight and ends at dark. I'll get fifteen loads a day hauled—maybe more."

"Want me to help?" Tom was hopeful that Joe would refuse.

"If you are going into this thing sure enough to learn you better get a shovel and be on hand when I come over for the first load," answered Joe.

"Tom will be there," interrupted his father dryly. "He's started this thing about wanting to learn farming; now he's got to keep it up."

"Oh, I'm no quitter!" asserted Tom, getting red. "Had no idea of dodging. I'll be there, and I'll work too!"

"All right. See you later," Joe Weston mounted the pony brought to the front door for him and, waving a fare, well, loped down the road toward home.

"Howdy, stranger? Light an' rest your saddle!" called his father, pretending not to know him after his absence.

"Believe I will. Here, ma; here's a half a dozen squirrels and a nice fat little wild turkey hen all dressed for you," Joe handed over the bundle.

"Those squirrels will make a bully pie, and I guess you know what to do with that wild turkey." The game had been carefully cleaned and kept on ice in the big refrigerator at the Ralston's.

"Mighty glad to get 'em," said his mother. "Looks to me like you've put on a few pounds lately, Joe."

"Wouldn't be surprised—at the rate I've been eating," chuckled Joe.

"We've been livin' pretty high ourselves since you've been running with those Yankee millionaire folks," said Mr. Weston. "Bear, deer, birds, wild turkey, squirrels—and you gettin' paid for it too!"

"Well, come to think of it, the scheme is pretty fine. But, then, pa, think of all the hard years we've had—no fun and powerful poor eating," suggested Joe soberly.

"That's so, and I've about come to the idea that the harder a man works the more fun he's got to have some time or other an' the more he appreciates it when it does come."

"Sorter looks that way, don't it?" agreed Joe. "Well, we've got to get busy now. Come on, let's round up the calves and stock. I'm going to turn them in on the oats. Tomorrow I want the wagon and team. I start to hauling manure."

"Where from? The stable?"

"No. Mr. Ralston told me I could have about fifty loads over there if I'd haul it off."

"Say now, that's fine, ain't it?"

"Biggest help to me I can think of," said Joe.

"Well, you get on the pony and drive the stock up from the paster, an' I'll open the gates. My, won't they have a picnic on them tender oats?"

The twenty-three calves Joe and his father had picked up for an average

of \$2.25 each were already beginning to show the effects of good treatment and care. They went after the succulent young oats, now something over shoe top high, voraciously, as did the cows and horses.

"Ain't that a pair of little beauties, though?" inquired Joe, indicating two fawn colored heifer calves.

"They are that—an' more than two-thirds Jersey. They ought to make good milk cows."

"They're too fine to sell for beef. Let's just keep them and raise them. And that black and white spotted one too," suggested Joe.

"Where'd you get that one? Looks to me like she's got a heap o' Holstein in her," said Mr. Weston.

"Got her from that Walker boy, and she has got Holstein in her. Made me pay \$3.50 for her on that account."

"Well, she's worth \$10 of anybody's money as she stands right now. With two Jerseys and the old cow and this calf of the old cow's and a Holstein we ought to be selling considerable butter in about three years—with what other good calves we can pick up," suggested Mr. Weston.

"I think so. And there's another helper in that bunch that shows signs of Jersey too. I'm in favor of keeping her."

"Ain't no better breed in the world for furnishing rich milk to make butter from. After while, when we're able, I'm for getting a herd of thoroughbred Jerseys," asserted Mr. Weston.

"We can sell the butter at a good profit, and there isn't a better feed on earth for pigs and chickens than buttermilk."

"Ain't these farmers fools to sell them calves for a little or nothin' like they have done? Now, just look at this herd. Actually hasn't cost us \$3 outlay for feed, except some cottonseed meal for those scrawny, pore, weak, starved little fellers. They won't cost us anything much next winter. We'll raise enough stuff here to carry 'em through. By this fall a year they'll be worth \$25 apiece of any man's money," Mr. Weston mused as he leaned over the gate and watched the contented cattle.

"We'll make something like \$500 clear on the idea and get three or four good milk cows too," added Joe.

"Then think. We've returned the feed an' humus to the soil and been able to make many a ton of manure to build up the land. That is worth \$200 cash itself, for we won't have to buy as much commercial stuff," suggested the older man.

"Isn't it wonderful, pa, how this business of progressing opens up—one thing from another? And it is all so plain and so sensible and accordin' to reason."

"It sure is!"

"And just to think, we haven't got started good yet, pa! Why, we're in the A. B. C. class yet compared with those farmers up north and in the middle west. They are the best farmers in the world, I reckon."

"I guess they've forgot more things about good farmin' than we know," agreed his father, enjoying the sight of the calves as they reaped the young oats.

"Speakin' of A. B. C.'s, Joe, I'm sorter pestered about your droppin' school like you have. Do you think it's a good idea, son?" Mr. Weston had of late become painfully aware of his own educational limitations.

"No, sir; but it couldn't be helped this year. Besides, I can read well and do read all the time, and I'm learning things. And, to tell the truth, I've got about as far as I can go in this little school here. That is a mighty poor teacher."

"Well, you can't expect much of a teacher at \$35 a month. She does the best she can, I reckon," said Mr. Weston charitably.

"Looks to me like the state ought to pay more and get better teachers for the country schools. At any rate, I'm reading my school books when I have a chance, and reading these bulletins will help me. Education is knowing things useful to you."

"Who told you that, son?"

"The president. He said there wasn't any more sense in packing a lot of useless junk around in your head than in hauling it about in a wagon."

"Believe he's right?"

"I know he's right. I'm trying to educate myself to be a first class farmer. She wants to make me study chemistry—not agricultural chemistry. She wants to make me study algebra and astronomy. I've got about as much use for them as that calf there has. Take yourself, pa. You see what you've learned from reading good agricultural books. Well, I've been learning too."

"If you get that scholarship to that agricultural school it'll be a big help to you."

"Yes, and along the line I want to learn. I'm going to win it too. You remember that?"

"Competition's goin' to be fierce," warned his father.

"Yes, but I've another scheme, and it's real easy too."

"How, for goodness' sake?"

"Well, it's simple. Just in making as much corn as I did last year, maybe a few bushels more, but in holding down the expense in making it."

Mr. Weston looked at him inquiringly.

"You see, I showed 'em how to make a big crop last year. It's easy. Just pile in the fertilizer after the ground has been well prepared and keep it worked good. And every boy is going to plunge hard on commercial fertilizers and nitrate of soda and potash and labor. They are not going to stop to figure the cost."

"I begin to see the point," grinned Mr. Weston.

"Well, this contest is judged as much on the low cost of producing the corn as on the amount. If I equal the best in the amount and beat them on the

cost I win, don't I?"

"That's business! That's business!" enthused his father.

"But you're bound to use some nitrate and stuff."

"Yes, sir. The land isn't rich enough yet to make a big crop without it. But every pound of barnyard stuff I put in it requires just so much less commercial stuff."

"I'll help every way I can. If you see where I can be of any use count on me," assured his father.

CHAPTER XIV.

Women Are Interested.

MAY you know anything about canning stuff?" asked Joe after full justice had been done to the savory squirrel pie and well baked turkey hen, both of which Joe had provided.

"Powerful little, son. Why?"

"Well, if you had a chance to learn would you?"

"Of course, if I had a canning outfit and somethin' to can."

"All right. Wait a minute." Joe left the table and returned with a pamphlet out of a bundle of several the mail carrier had left that morning.

"Here it is, one of the government bulletins. Gives you the whole thing right here. If you'll just study this until you get it fixed in your mind I'll buy you a nice canning outfit."

"That would be mighty nice and a big help next winter to have plenty of canned huckleberries and blackberries and plums and peaches and things to make pies of. We'd live high!"

"I'm going to plant a lot of tomatoes and snap beans. Those that ain't fancy enough to sell you and sister Annie can pick and put them up. There'll be plenty of them."

"I'll bet you could make some money on 'em, wife," suggested Mr. Weston.

"I know what they pay for canned tomatoes wholesale."

"How much, pa?" inquired Mrs. Weston.

"They pay the wholesale grocers 80 cents a dozen and retail at 10 cents a can—\$1.20 a dozen."

"What do the cans and all cost to put 'em up?" persisted Mrs. Weston.

"I don't know, except from the report of the Girls' Tomato Club work. It says there that the cans and labels cost about a cent and three-quarters each and estimate cost of tomatoes and labor for each can at a cent."

Mrs. Weston did some mental arithmetic.

"Even then there's a fair profit in it. The person who grows the tomatoes and puts 'em up gets the cent. Really, the cost is a cent and three-quarters a can, ain't it?"

Her husband nodded.

"I'll bet you could sell many a dozen to boarding houses and hotels in town at a dollar a dozen. It would mean an additional profit of 20 cents for you and a saving of 20 cents for them over what they'd have to pay retail," suggested Joe.

"It looks pretty good," announced Mrs. Weston. "You get me that canning outfit, and I'll make a try at it."

"All right. If I win that scholarship I won't be here next spring, ma, and you can have my prize corn acre to raise tomatoes on, and it won't cost you a cent for fertilizer. It will be plenty rich. You ought to clean up a pretty nice pile."

"All my life I've wanted some way to make some money of my own," said Mrs. Weston. "Now I see the way, and I'm going to follow it. You men needn't think you are the only money makers. Just watch Annie and me with my chickens and canning outfit!"

"Tell you another scheme, ma. I'll set aside three nice spring pigs. You and Annie fatten 'em up and turn 'em into that fine smoked sausage next winter. I'll bet you can make a lot on that too."

"Well, that's a fine plan! Never thought of it. And I heard Miss Allen in town complainin' that she couldn't get pure pork sausage from the butchers any more—they filled it up with beef scraps!" enthused Mrs. Weston.

"We'll try that too."

"Isn't a bit of reason in the world why all the canned fruit and vegetables farmers buy out of stores shouldn't be put up on the farms. Save a heap of money," reflected Joe.

"Stid of that!" chuckled Mr. Weston. "I see these here triflin' farmers a-buyin' canned tomatoes an' corn an' such an' haulin' it out where it ought to grow an' be saved."

"I know where there's a big pile of tomato cans behind the barn!" announced Annie proudly, trying to get into the drift of the conversation. The whole family exploded into a laugh.

"I'm guilty, sis!" chuckled his father. "Just as guilty as any of the rest of 'em, but I was sort of hopin' nobody would throw it up to me."

"We won't do it any more," assured Mrs. Weston. "You get me that canning outfit and I'll start practicin' on early vegetables—peas, beets and such. Then by the time tomatoes are ripe I'll be ready too. Can we afford it, though? Those canning outfits are dreadful expensive, ain't they?" she asked with some apprehension.

"Oh, I don't know!" replied Joe easily. "The one the Girls' Tomato Club use, tested and recommended by the experts of the agricultural department, costs about \$3.50, and the cans and labels a cent and three-quarters—maybe about a cent and a half if the label is not counted."

"My goodness! I thought a canning outfit would cost \$20 or \$25 or \$50 or some such awful price!" she exclaimed with relief.

"I had no idee they were that cheap myself," said Mr. Weston. "And with 'em as easy to get as that, just to think of the stuff that goes to waste around these farms that could be saved!"

Continued on page 7.)

EAST FORK.

Rev. Odell filled his appointment at Trinity Sunday.

The sick of our community, we are glad to say are improving.

Myrtle Queen, after a visit to home folks Saturday and Sunday, returned to her school at Trinity Monday.

Carl Rose and Vanna Shortridge were very pleasantly entertained by Georgia Riffe Sunday.

Mrs. James McDowell, who has been very sick with pneumonia, we are glad to say is better.

Mrs. J. T. Fannin called at W. M. Riffe's Sunday.

Curtis Jeece, one of Lawrence county's promising young teachers, will enter high school at Louisa on next Monday.

Miss Grace Belcher has been on the sick list for the past week, but is able to be out again.

We are sorry to learn of the illness of our former neighbor, J. H. Wood, and we hope for his early recovery.

Mrs. F. M. Twinn of Columbia, O., and Mrs. Ida Lockwood of Ft. Gay, W. Va., were called home on account of the illness of their parents, Mr. and Mrs. W. M. Riffe.

Dr. J. C. Hall is kept very busy day and night on account of so much sickness.

Harry Riffe made a business trip to Estep Wednesday last.

Several from this place are expecting to attend the quarterly meeting to be held at Ross chapel next Sunday, January 22.

F. B. Neal passed through our community last Saturday en route to Ashland.

Author Queen called at Dave Burks Sunday.

Azel Holbrook, we learn is in the hospital after an operation for appendicitis.

John G. Morris of Rush, was calling on Georgia Riffe Sunday afternoon.

SLABTOWN PETE.

EAST POINT.

Samuel E. Kelly and wife of New York, who have been visiting their father, J. S. Kelly, have returned home.

Dr. W. L. Hatcher and wife and daughter, Mary Louise are home from St. Louis where Miss Mary Louise has been attending medical college. Two other daughters are attending the same college.

Misses Agnes and Margaret Auxier were at Paintsville recently. Miss Margaret will enter the S. V. S. soon.

Letter from the family of Mrs. Margaret Chamber of near Logan, W. Va., states that she has been stricken with paralysis and is not expected to live long. She was born and raised in this county, being the daughter of Samuel Auxier, long since deceased, and therefore she has many relatives throughout the Sandy Valley, who will be interested in hearing from her.

Will George of near Auxier has purchased a farm in Carter-co., and will move his family there.

John Wesley Mayo died at the home for the feeble minded and his remains were brought to this place and buried in the old Mayo graveyard near Hager Hill. Though a life long sufferer he had always been cared for by kind relatives until a few months ago he was sent to the home where he died. He was about seventy-two years old.

Mrs. R. A. E. Leslie and children have joined her husband in Southeastern Virginia where Mr. Leslie has purchased a farm.

He Tried Them All.

Redd—Boating is a great sport. Greene—So they told me. "And you tried it?"

"Oh, yes; all kinds."

"Which do you like best?"

"Well, I don't know. You see, when I tried sailing half of the time we became becalmed; then I tried a motorboat, and the old motor got out of order nearly every trip."

"Why didn't you try rowing?"

"I did."

"Didn't you like that?"

"Oh, yes, pretty well, but my wife got tired rowing all the time."—Yonkers Statesman.

A Long Lost Cousin.

An old Chinese scholar came for treatment to a hospital that was under the charge of a certain Dr. Woods.

The doctor asked the new patient his honorable name. The old gentleman replied that his unworthy name was Ling and added that he desired to know the doctor's exalted name. With a smile, the doctor said that his mean name was Ling (which is Chinese for Woods).

"Why?" exclaimed the Chinaman with terror. "The same name! Now I recall that in the Hsu dynasty (B. C. 200) there was a big famine, and a part of our clan left China and were said to have crossed over the great eastern sea. They were never heard of again, but now I see they reached America."

And greatly to the good doctor's amusement, he was greeted as one of the family and cordially welcomed into the clan of Ling.—Youth's Companion.

ed a fruit farm and located on same, but Miss May will remain in Kentucky for awhile teaching at Flat Gap, and Miss Ruth continues as assistant postmistress at Paintsville.

Our school at this place will close soon.

Bob Auxier was a business visitor to Paintsville Monday. SENGHA.

I SELL LAND THAT WILL MAKE YOU INDEPENDENT FOR LIFE.

300 A. 100 A. bottom, balance blue-grass pasture, some timber, 8 room house, barn 10